29th, Vitebsk:

The enemy are retreating on all sides; we cannot catch them up.

August 1st. General Guyon's light cavalry brigade has pushed as far as Nevel, and found nothing; the Viceroy has also pushed out detachments as far as Velije.

2d. Nothing new.

6th. I propose marching straight on the enemy, probably by the left bank of the Dnieper, capturing Smolensk and bringing the Russian army to battle if it chooses to remain in its present position.

7th. (To Barbier.) The Emperor would like a few amusing books. If there are any good new novels, or old ones he has not read, or some interesting memoirs, you might send them on, for we have spare time here that is not easy to kill.

10th. My information is that the enemy have completely withdrawn; we have pushed out parties for several leagues and have not seen them.

15th, bivouac at Boyarintsova:

I am marching on Smolensk. We may have a great battle to-morrow. The advance guard was engaged yesterday, and the 27th Russian division was smashed.

18th, Smolensk:

I am just in, the heat is oppressive and there is much dust, which is rather tiring. The whole of the enemy's army was here; it was under orders to fight, but didn't dare to. We had to force our way into Smolensk.

The Russian army, which is very discouraged and dissatisfied, is retreating in the direction of Moscow.

23d. (To the Countess de Montesquieu.)

I have re-